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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Procedures for the purchase and utilization of vehicles and other equipment by United Nations field missions

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Background

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 59/270, wherein the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to codify appropriate procedures for the purchase and utilization of vehicles and other equipment by United Nations field missions to ensure compliance by all missions with the procedures and to report thereon to the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixtieth session.

II. Procedures implemented

2. **System contracts for vehicles.** The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has greatly enhanced the level of standardization of its vehicle fleet by establishing system contracts for almost all of its vehicle requirements. As a result, about 90 per cent of the vehicle fleet will now be sourced from six major manufacturers. The remaining 10 per cent of the fleet, which includes specialized equipment such as airfield support and heavy engineering equipment, are from 70 different manufacturers. The long lifespan of the specialized vehicles results in new vehicles being brought into use while the older vehicles are still operational. The Department appreciates the difficulty of providing spare parts for a varied mix of vehicles but strives to get maximum utility from vehicular assets.

3. **Spare parts.** The Department has established system contracts for spare parts of the vehicles to assist in reducing inventory holdings in peacekeeping missions. However, a number of factors affect the spare part holdings in field missions, such

* The document was delayed owing to impending deadlines for support account submission and other reports.

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as the number of vehicle makes and models, their physical geographical location within the mission area and spare part order lead times. The Department is aware of the situation and has actively addressed the matter. A series of instructions have been developed jointly with the Procurement Service, including the modification of the ordering process within the system contracts. The instructions will significantly accelerate deliveries and consequently reduce the level of inventory in the missions. In addition, an ongoing consumption analysis by all missions will be used to determine their maximum and minimum stock levels. The Department has also established focal points in each mission to improve information-sharing and inter-mission cooperation on the use and transfer to other missions of excess spare parts. Furthermore, a number of training courses have been developed and implemented with the support of the main vehicle suppliers with which the United Nations has system contracts. The courses have helped to develop the skills of staff in spare parts management, which is very different from stores management, and efforts in this direction will continue in the future. The Department will continue to monitor the spare parts holdings of missions and further develop its management of spare parts.

4. **Vehicle establishment ratios.** The Department reviews the mission budgets to ensure that mission vehicle holdings are within the established standard ratios. Any deviations from such ratios require adequate justification according to the operating conditions and complexity of the mission. Requests for vehicle replacement and new acquisitions are reviewed to ensure that all vehicles that are written off meet the criteria of age and mileage and that any acquisitions will not result in excessive vehicle holdings in the mission. The Department has also developed a policy for the provision and allocation of vehicles to senior mission personnel, including specialized security vehicles such as armoured vehicles. The policy sets limits on the number and price of vehicles provided to senior mission personnel.

5. **Road safety.** The Department has taken steps to help minimize vehicle accidents in missions. Steps include the appointment of dangerous goods safety advisers in each mission. The adviser focal points are responsible for the safe movement of dangerous goods in the mission area and interface with the security personnel on United Nations vehicular assets. The Department also imparts training to its vehicle testers and the advisers to ensure that vehicle safety standards are maintained. Missions also provide training for drivers of specialized vehicles, such as armoured vehicles. In addition, missions have been advised to use a uniform driver testing standard for the driver permits, as described in the Surface Transport Manual. To raise safety awareness, each mission is required to conduct a week-long road safety awareness campaign every year.

6. **Rotation of vehicles.** To ensure optimal use and maintenance of vehicles, the Department has established a rotation requirement enunciated in the Surface Transport Manual. The Department reiterates that requirement in its annual communication of budget planning guidelines to missions. A general circular has also been issued to all missions emphasizing the need for judicious rotation of vehicles. The Department will continue to monitor the issue to ensure more uniform use of vehicles.

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7. The Department will continue to implement measures for the purchase and utilization of vehicles and other equipment by United Nations field missions.

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III. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

8. The action to be taken by the General Assembly is to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on procedures implemented for the purchase and utilization of vehicles in missions.